A

REPRESENTATION

OF THE

Present State

OF

RELIGION,

With Regard to

Infidelity, *Heresy*, *Impiety* and *Popery*:

Drawn up and Agreed upon by Both

Houses of Convocation

IN

IRELAND,

Pursuant to Her Majesty's Command in Her Royal Licence.

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To the QUEEN'S Moſt Excellent MAJESTY.

A Repreſentation *of the Preſent State of Religion with Regard to* Infidelity, Hereſy, Impiety, *and* Popery, *Drawn up and Agreed to by both Houſes of Convocation in* Ireland, *Purſuant to Her Majeſty's Command in Her Royal Licence.*

May it Pleaſe Your Majeſty.

WE the Archbiſhops, and Biſhops, and the reſt of the Clergy of this Your MAJESTY'S Kingdom of *Ireland*, in Convocation Aſſembled, do joyfully Embrace this Opportunity of Returning Your MAJESTY our Unfeigned and Hearty Thanks, for convening us in a NATIONAL SYNOD: And by Your ROYAL Licence rendering us Uſeful to all the ends and purpoſes of our meeting in an *Eccleſiaſtical* Body.

YOUR MAJESTY has herein Imitated the Beſt and Holieſt Princes, in the more early and flouriſhing Ages of the Church; who have maintain'd It in all its Rights and Privileges, and afforded their aid and aſſiſtance in all Emergencies; in ſupporting its Diſcipline, confirming and enforcing its Cenſures, and preſerving to the Governors of it inviolable thoſe Powers, with which CHRIST had Intruſted them, for the Suppreſſion of Vice and Wickedneſs, and for promoting Religion and Piety in the World. We being likewiſe incited by ſo Great an Example, and encourged by Your MAJESTY'S tender Care, and gracious Patronage of us, ſhall, by the Bleſſing of GOD, endeavour to imitate thoſe antient Biſhops and Paſtors of the Church, in conſulting and reſolving upon all things, which we conceive moſt for the Benefit and Advantage thereof; and in an unfeigned Obedience to Your MAJESTY, as in all other Matters recommended to us in Your Royal Licence, ſo particularly in

A REPRESENTATION *of the State of Religion among us with Regard to* Infidelity, Hereſy, Impiety, *and* Popery.

I. IT is with the Greateſt Pleaſure and Satisfaction that we can acquaint Your MAJESTY that *Deiſm*, and INFIDELITY have not as yet arriven to that amazing Height, at which they are repreſented to be, in ſome other parts of your Dominions; ſo as to appear open and barefaced, to be publickly own'd and abetted, to be carried on by ſecret Combinations of Men, and not without great Trouble and Charge to be propagated by regular and concerted Meaſures: Tho' we cannot ſay that the ſubtle Deſigns, and reſtleſs Endeavours of thoſe Advocates for *Infidelity* have been altogether without Effect in this Kingdom; the Infection hath reach'd us in ſome Degree, and the Peſtilence, which hath hitherto walked in Darkneſs, has begun of late to diſcloſe it ſelf. *Infidelity.*

MANY of thoſe *Atheiſtical* Books and Pamphlets, wrote and diſperſed in our Neighbour Nation, have been ſent or brought over hither, and ſome

of

of them reprinted here, which are with great Artifice calculated to undermine the Foundations of Chriſtianity, and expoſe all that is accounted Sacred among us to Contempt and Scorn. By this means the Seeds of *Infidelity* are ſown among us, the Minds of too many are poyſoned, and inſenſibly carried on to a Diſeſteem of all reveal'd Religion, and the myſterious Truths of the Goſpel; They are inclin'd too ſtrongly to ſet up the Light of Nature for their only Guide, and ſatisfie their Conſciences with a Religion purely Moral, and conceive a Coldneſs and Indifference towards the Conſtitution of our Holy Church.

BUT, tho' this Myſtery of *Infidelity* and *Atheiſm* hath made theſe Steps among us, yet we have reaſon to Bleſs GOD, that it is not come to that Extremity, that plain Attempts ſhould be made for the gaining of Proſelytes to them: Or, that they ſhould be openly ſpread through the Na-
Toland. tion with Impunity. For when a Perſon, (in all probability an Emiſſary ſent over among us, and ſupported for the Propagation of *Infidelity*,) wrote an Impious Book, with Deſign to confound Faith and Knowledge, and to prove there cou'd be no ſuch thing as Myſtery, becauſe we can believe nothing beyond the immediate Object of our Senſes; The Repreſentatives of the People in Parliament expreſſed their juſt Deteſtation and Abhorrence of it, ordering the Book to be burnt before the parliament Houſe, and obliged the Author to fly the Kingdom. The like Zeal, for the Glory of GOD and his Truth, they ſhewed upon occaſion of another Attempt made with the ſame Deſign; A Pamphlet being Publiſhed to ſhew that, by a ſtrong Faith, Men may be Tranſlated to Eternal Life, without paſſing through Death, from a ridiculous Application of thoſe Texts of Scripture, which ſpeak of our freedom from the Spiritual Death of Sin and Eternal Death hereafter, to a temporal Separation of Soul and
Aſgil. Body; the Author was not only expell'd the Houſe of Commons by a publick Vote, but declar'd *Incapable of being thereafter choſen or return'd a Member of any Succeeding Parliament in this Kingdom.* Nor can we conceal from Your MAJESTY, upon this occaſion, how far Your Courts of Juſtice in this Kingdom have Exerted themſelves in the Condemnation
Emlin. of a Diſſenting Preacher; who, for publickly denying the *Divinity* of CHRIST, was fined and impriſoned, and forced to withdraw himſelf out of this Kingdom.

AS to the Cauſes of *Infidelity*, We obſerve to Your MAJESTY there are chiefly Two, that have occaſioned the ſpreading thereof, not only in Your MAJESTY's Dominions, but alſo univerſally over all *Europe*.

THE *Firſt* is that of the *Socinian Hereſy*, which hath Diſtinguiſhed away the *Divinity* and *Satisfaction* of CHRIST, and turn'd our whole Religion into *Figure* and *Meer Analogy*, which, by immediate conſequence, reſolves it all into humane Reaſon.

THE *Other* is, that groſs Superſtition of the Church of *Rome*; which hath turn'd their Publick Worſhip and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments into outward Pomp and Pageantry; This, together with that palpable Hypocriſy of calculating many of the Doctrines of their Church for Gain, is ſo fully detected, and become ſo odious, even to thoſe of their own Communion, that great Numbers too eaſily run into the other Extreme of utterly rejecting all reveal'd Religion. This *Infidelity*, which took its firſt Riſe from Popiſh Countries, hath Spread it ſelf among Proteſtants; and is catch'd up greedily by ſuch, whoſe immoral Lives make

make them deſpair of Salvation in a true Religion, and is now growing dangerous to all Communities of Chriſtians.

THAT which hath not a little contributed to the Promoting of thoſe Principles of *Prophaneſs* and *Infidelity* in theſe Nations in particular, is that Neglect and Diſeſteem of *Academical Education*, which hath of late ſo much prevail'd: and, inſtead thereof, the placing of youth under the Care of *Foreigners* and other *private Tutors*; whoſe ſufficiency, in reference to Learning: and whoſe Principles, in regard to our Religion and Government, we have Reaſon to ſuſpect.

II. BUT tho' *Infidelity* hath been Checkt and Diſcountenanced in its firſt Appearance by our good Laws, and the Zeal of our Magiſtrates in putting them in Execution; yet it hath been out of the Power of both to put a Stop to thoſe many HERETICAL *Opinions*, and *Wild Enthuſiaſtical Notions* ſtill rife and prevailing among us. Such as are not only the private Deluſions of ſome particular perſons, but moſt of them publickly maintained and propagated, by diſtinct Bodies, under different Denominations, according to the Variety of their *Heretical* Tenets, as *Independents*, *Anabaptiſts*, *Muggletonians*, *Quakers*, &c. Many of whoſe Opinions are horridly Blaſphemous and Deteſtable. *Hereſy.*

BUT none of them, as we humbly conceive, at preſent require ſo much the watchful Eye of the Government, as that growing Sect of the QUAKERS, who cannot properly come under the denomination of Chriſtians; They flatly rejecting both the Sacraments, of *Baptiſm* and the *Lords Supper*; and, when it is cloſely urged to them, do in truth and reality allow of no CHRIST but that *within* them. It may be juſtly wonder'd at, that a Sect of Men, who have no fixt Principles, moſt of them confus'd and unintelligible, deducible neither from Reaſon nor Scripture, and quite beſide the common ſenſe of all mankind, ſhould prevail in the world; And yet conſidering the many ſecular Advantages which concur to the Increaſe of their Numbers, it may juſtly be feared that, without ſome effectual Methods of reſtraining them and ſtopping their Progreſs, they may in a little time become formidable to Church and State.

AS, that their Religion is with great ſubtlety calculated to be *within* them, and by that means all Obligation, to the external Duties of Religion is cut off; which leaves them a Latitude for the Committal of all Immoralities, which can be conceal'd. And thus they can retain a ſpecious Pretence of Religion, without any Trouble and Avocation from the purſuit of Gain, upon which they are of all People the moſt intent: And accordingly, that they have formed themſelves into a Society or Company for Trade and Traffick; which renders them ſo firmly united, becauſe their great Deſign is to Manage and Promote their common Intereſt: Nor can they be divided by Opinions in Religion, ſince every one among them may believe what he pleaſes.

THAT, under Pretence and Colour of Religion, they have conſtant Annual and Quarterly Meetings for ſettling a Courſe of ſpeedy Intelligence for Rates of Things, and the Riſe and Fall of all Commodities.

THAT they are exempted from all thoſe Legal Services, both Troubleſome and Chargeable, to which thoſe of our Communion are liable; and

ſo freed from any Diverſion or Intermiſſion from the Proſecution of their particular Trades and Callings.

THAT they have their Agents, both here and in *Great Britain*, to inform them of every thing in Agitation, which they conceive to the diſadvantage of their Party, how profitable ſoever to the Publick. And that, according to the Method, which of late hath been found the moſt effectual for carrying on the Deſigns of a Sect or Party, they are ſaid to have a greater Sum in Bank, by a common Contribution, than any other Sect among us; to be applied in their Favour at any ſeaſonable Juncture which may offer, for the obtaining any Exemption or Privilege: that they now think themſelves conſiderable enough to Addreſs and Compliment Your MAJESTY'S Chief Governours upon their Acceſſion to the Government, and take upon then to give a Publick Oppoſition to the paſſing of any Bills, which may be to the Prejudice of their Sect; and are heard by their Council for that purpoſe. All which Advantages they manage for the gaining and ſecuring of Proſelytes to their *Heretical* Opinions.

TO which may be added the Encouragement given to others to come to them, by their being indulged in their not taking of Oaths; as if thoſe, who cannot be juſtly deemed Chriſtians, were of greater Veracity than the reſt of Your MAJESTY's Subjects.

AND here we think we cannot diſcharge our Duty to Your MAJESTY, and that Truſt repoſed in us by Your ROYAL Licence, without a *Repreſentation* likewiſe of many other *falſe Opinions*, and *dangerous Errors* and *Practices* of Pernicious Conſequence not only to the Eſtabliſh'd Conſtitution of our Church, but expreſly contrary to the Word of GOD.

THE Doctrines of our Church have been openly and in Print repreſented as *Unſound* and *Erronious*; our publick Worſhip and Diſcipline branded with the odious names of *Popery* and *Superſtition*; and grievous Reflections are caſt upon *the Act of Uniformity*, and all other Laws in force for the defence and ſupport of it; tho', thro' the Indulgence of Your MAJESTY's Government, the Perſons, that thus inſult our Church, are not reſtrain'd from the free Exerciſe of their Religion.

PAPERS and Pamphlets have been induſtriouſly diſperſed in Derogation of Your MAJESTY's Title and Government; the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT reprinted and handed thro' the Kingdom, together with the *Presbyterian Directory*, and other Seditious and Fanatical pieces, by Pedlars and Vagabonds. And there is but too juſt Reaſon to fear, that, at their pretended Ordinations, the Diſſenting Preachers are obliged to take the SOLEMN LEAGUE and COVENANT; they never yet having made any publick Renunciation of it, and it being required in the *Directory* as a neceſſary Preliminary to their Ordination.

OUR *Office of Matrimony* is traduced in Print as *Unlawful* and *Idolatrous*. Sermons are preach'd and publiſhed, wherein 'tis expreſly ſaid, *That the Holy Euchariſt is turn'd into an Engine for advancing a State Faction, and the Common Table of our Lord confined by Arbitrary Encloſures to a* Party, *and that Religion is thereby too far debaſed to ſerve mean and unworthy purpoſes.* The Canons of the Church are aſſerted to be *not only Unneceſſary*, but *Contrary to the Churches Intereſt and Edification*, and it is likewiſe

Boyſe's *Sermons.*

likewiſe affirm'd, *that by the Laws of CHRIST* Dioceſan Prelates *muſt be Caſheered from the number of lawful Paſtors*, and are charged with *Heinous Schiſm.*

BESIDES the Methods already Mentioned, by which they expoſe our Doctrine and Worſhip, blaſt the Credit of our Holy Orders, and poyſon the Minds of men with their Erroneous Opinions; there are other Practices with which they carry on the Deſign and Intereſt of their Sect and Party by a high hand, without fear of Law or Magiſtrates: By Incorporating into diſtinct Communities, and forming themſelves into *Seſſions*, *Presbyteries*, *Claſſical* and *Provincial Synods* as Courts of Judicature, wherein they proceed by Information, and Libel, Examination of Witneſſes, Adminiſtration of Oaths with Hands lifted up to the moſt high GOD, and by iſſuing out Summons, and ſometimes even to Members of the Eſtabliſhed Church, and then by proceeding to a definitive Sentence, from whence there is no Appeal. In their *Synods*, both *Claſſical* and *Provincial*, they Exerciſe *Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction* in a Solemn and Publick manner, not only with all the Forms of Adjournment from time to time, and from one place to another; but by Delegation of their Power thro' many parts of the Kingdom. Practices dangerous to Your MAJESTY's *Prerogative*, and which, without ſufficient Authority received, wou'd be no leſs than *Præmunire* in any Members of the Eſtabliſh'd Church.

SEMINARIES are ſet up, not only for teaching Philoſophy, which ſhould only be taught in Your MAJESTY's Univerſity of *Dublin*, but for training Youth up in *Anti-Epiſcopal Principles*, and, it may be highly preſumed, in *Anti-Monarchical* alſo; and this without taking the Oaths by Law requir'd. From hence they are ſupplyed with Emiſſaries, who are diſperſed with Commiſſion thro' all Parts of the Kingdom, even to the ſetting up Conventicles in Towns intirely conformable; where they had no Call or Invitation, and where no Diſſenting Meetings had been for many Years before. And, when the Zeal and Authority of the Biſhops and Magiſtrates did ſeaſonably exert it ſelf to ſtop their Progreſs by *Proſecutions at Law*, they, by their Intereſt IN A LATE GOVERNMENT, obtain'd the Writ of *Noli Proſequi.*

FOR ſome years paſt, when Diſſenters began to conceive great hopes from *an Advantageous Juncture*, and the Courſe of Publick Affairs ſeem'd to move with a favourable Aſpect towards them; They erected large Piles of Buildings in the form of our Churches, in the midſt of Towns and Cities, and (notwithſtanding the Oppoſition given) even in the very Neighbourhood of our Cathedrals.

THE Clergy of the Eſtabliſh'd Church have been openly inſulted in the diſcharge of their Office. Several Diſſenting Teachers continued their publick Courſe of Preaching without taking *the Oath of Abjuration*; and were it not for the ſeaſonable and timely Security of the Church, provided by Your MAJESTY's Foreſight, and Tender Care of it, by the the TEST CLAUSE, in the Act *to prevent the further Growth of Popery*; the Diſſenters had, in all probability, by this time engroſſed the Corporations and Civil Offices in moſt parts of this Kingdom.

A Publick Motion hath been made in Parliament for the Suſpenſion of all the Penal Laws againſt them; and when a *Toleration for Diſſenters* was in Agitation, upon the ſame foot with that of their Brethren in *England*, and

and it was ſignified, that an Indulgence might have been obtained for them with the Sacramental Teſt; it was rejected with Scorn, and ſaid to be *A giving them a Stone inſtead of Bread, and a Serpent inſtead of a Fiſh.* Nor can it ever be forgotten what Numbers of them poſitively refuſed the *Oath of Allegiance*, when the Militia was to be arrayed in this Kingdom for Oppoſing the Invaſion of *the Pretender.*

NOR are their Endeavours ſlackned by the late Change of the MINISTRY ſo viſibly brought about by the hand of GOD; who (as in the uſual Courſe of his Providence He loves then to interpoſe, when Affairs come to ſuch Extremity, that they are apparently out of all humane Powers) inſpired your ROYAL Heart with Sagacity to foreſee the Danger we were in: and with Courage to gather up the Reins, and give things a ſudden Turn when we were upon the Brink of a Precipice; and that a few Steps further might have overturn'd our whole Conſtitution both of Church and State. And there is but too great Reaſon to fear, that they are ſtill reſtleſs and indefatigable; that they increaſe the Number of their Emiſſaries, and carry on the Intereſt of their Party by *Common Funds*: And here we humbly obſerve to Your MAJESTY, how juſt Cauſe there is to be apprehenſive, that the Great and ROYAL BOUNTY of *Twelve Hundred Pounds* per Annum, which hath been allow'd them *upon the Eſtabliſhment* ſo many years before Your Happy Acceſſion to the Throne, hath been applied to the conſiderable Increaſe of the Number of Fanatical and Diſſenting Teachers, and to the Support and Promoting of Faction and Schiſm among us; of which the Body of the Nation, in this Honourable *Houſe of Commons*, were ſo ſenſible, that they Voted it *An unneceſſary Branch of the Eſtabliſhment.*

THE Number of their Teachers and Expectants (as they call their young *Probationers*) is conſiderably increas'd, ſo as to be now a Burthen to them greater than they are able to bear, were it not for that great Allowance of *Twelve Hundred Pounds* per Annum.

AND here we humbly acquaint Your MAJESTY, that the FRENCH REFUGEES, who, upon their firſt Coming over into this Kingdom, did all Conform to the Eſtabliſh'd Church; and were treated with utmoſt Tenderneſs and Humanity; and great Numbers of them ſubſiſted at an immenſe Charge for theſe twenty years paſt; in hopes, that the more they were acquainted with our Conſtitution and Worſhip, they would more firmly adhere to the Communion of our Church: yet ſome years before Your MAJESTY'S Happy Acceſſion to the Throne, they were broken into *Non-Conforming* Congregations; and this in Contradiction to the known Principles, as well of other Reformed Churches and Divines, as of thoſe of *France*; who, ſince the Reformation, have kept in ſtrict Communion with our Church, and on all Occaſions given ample Approbations of our Doctrine and Worſhip. In all likelihood their Numbers will be conſiderably increas'd, when GOD ſhall Bleſs theſe Nations with PEACE; ſo that there is juſt Cauſe to fear, that, unleſs ſome effectual Expedient be found out to bring them into Union with the Eſtabliſhed Church, theſe divided Congregations may be perpetuated to Poſterity; and that their Children at leaſt will fall in with thoſe ſeveral Sectaries among us, who will omit no Art or Induſtry to confirm them in their Separation; by which means that Great Charity may end in the Promoting of SCHISM in the Church, and FACTION in the State.

WE humbly take leave to lay before Your MAJESTY ſome few of the Principal Cauſes of the Riſe and Growth of theſe *Hereſies* and *Schiſms* among us.

THE firſt Cauſe we Aſſign is that of the great Number of Sectaries, who came over into this Kingdom, in the time of that Wicked and Deteſtable Uſurper *Oliver Cromwell*; They, having Suck'd in all the Taint and Poyſon of thoſe late Times, ſpread that *Enthuſiaſm*, which, under a ſpecious Pretence of Sanctity, is ever accompanied with a Mixture of Sedition, thro' the Kingdom.

ANOTHER Cauſe, we humbly take leave to mention, is the Lenity of the Government and merciful Temper and Diſpoſition of the Eſtabliſh'd Church; which is ſo far from a Spirit of Perſecution, that it hardly conſults its own Safety; notwithſtanding all thoſe, as well Secret Deſigns as Barefaced Practices, to undermine and deſtroy it. Our Sectaries, and particularly the Presbyterians, have been always treated with the utmoſt Clemency and Mildneſs, and with a Connivance at their many Violations of the Laws, in breaking in upon our Eſtabliſhment both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical. They not being conſidered as People, whoſe *Fundamental Principle* it is never to ſubmit to any Rules or Forms of Worſhip, which are eſtabliſh'd by publick Authority: when at the ſame time the private Conſtitutions of a *Presbytery* ſhall be Sacred and inviolable. That every Conceſſion made to them hath proved an Incouragement to demand more, and for a further Uſurpation upon us; that they never cou'd be Prevail'd upon to propoſe or accept any Terms of Communion; that the conſtant Tenor of their Diſcourſe is MODERATION, and *Forbearance* towards weak and tender Conſciences, when they are in a Low Condition: But, where they have the Aſcendency, to call TOLERATION *Eſtabliſhing Iniquity by a Law*.

THE great Neceſſity of ſome *Acts*, for the Preſervation of our Conſtitution, will further appear to Your MAJESTY; when we humbly pray it may be obſerved, that however Diſagreeing and Contradictory to one another the Principles of all our Sectaries are: Yet time hath ſhewn how that they can all fall in with any diſguſted Party, even of our own Communion; and can alſo cloſe with *Deiſts*, *Socinians*, and all the *Enemies of Revealed Religion*, nay, even with *Papiſts* themſelves, to Diſſolve the preſent Frame of Government, notwithſtanding their Cry againſt *Popery*.

III. WE are unwilling to Grieve Your MAJESTY's truly Chriſtian Heart with a *Repreſentation* of thoſe manifold IMPIETIES, and Scandalous *Immoralities*, which are ſo riſe and prevailing among us. *Impiety.*

WE are not without frequent Inſtances of *Polygamy* and Inceſtuous Marriages; The *Holy Name* of GOD is habitually prophaned by horrid Oaths and Imprecations; Wicked and Blaſphemous HEALTHS are frequently uſed, by Perſons Diſaffected to our Conſtitution: Inſomuch that the Words of our *Litany*, wherein we pray to be delivered *from Plague, Peſtilence, and Famine, Battle, Murther, and ſudden Death*, have been turn'd into a Bitter *Curſe*, upon *all Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons, and all Congregations committed to their Charge, who refuſe to drink to the Glorious and Immortal Memory of the Dead*. The wicked and deteſtable Cuſtom of *Duelling* prevails, from a falſe notion of Honour, in direct Contradiction to the plain Commands of CHRIST and the Spirit of the Goſpel, by which the

Land is frequently defiled with Blood. *Rioting* and *Drunkenneſs*, *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Laſciviouſneſs*, do ſo much abound among us, that a Senſe of the heinous and damning Nature of them ſeems to be much worn out of the Minds of Men. Many, who paſs for Members of the Eſtabliſh'd Church, rarely appear at the publick Worſhip of GOD; and Many more of thoſe who do, yet ſeldome frequent the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, unleſs for an *Office* or *Employment*; and, upon ſuch Worldly Motives, profeſſed Enemies of our Conſtitution will OCCASIONALLY Communicate with us.

THE Clergy have not been wanting in their Endeavours to put a ſtop to theſe Flagrant and Bareſaced *Impieties*, but are frequently Born down by a Torrent of Vice, and trampled upon, when they have Courage to ſtand in the Gap; ſo that too often they can only lament and bemoan what they have not Power to ſuppreſs or reſtrain.

ONE great cauſe of this prevailing *Immorality*, and General Want of a true ſenſe of GOD and Religion among us, is the Neglect of Parents and Maſters in not bringing their Children and Servants to be Inſtructed in the Firſt Principles of Chriſtianity, and in not Inſtilling into them a due ſenſe of Religion, and their not keeping them to the Reading and Underſtanding of the *Holy Scriptures*.

Popery. IV. AS to the preſent State of the PAPISTS in this Kingdom, whoſe *Converſion* Your MAJESTY has ſo much at Heart, even under that immenſe Weight of Affairs, relating, not only to Your own Dominions, but to all *Europe*. We cheerfully embrace this happy Opportunity of contributing our utmoſt Endeavours to bring this Your ROYAL *Will* and *Pleaſure* to good effect.

THE *Popiſh Prieſts* are generally neither Able nor Willing to Inſtruct the People in the Fundamental Points of Chriſtianity; ſo that they, for the moſt part, live in a ſtupid Ignorance: *They* not only, under pain of Damnation, prohibit their People from reading of the Scriptures, but even from hearing them read; and rarely have any ſuch thing as Catechiſing among them. The People being thus for want of Chriſtian Inſtruction brought to Believe that their Eternal Ruin or Salvation depends upon the Breath of the Prieſts, who *Save* and *Damn* them at pleaſure, and terrify them on any occaſion with a poſitive Sentence of *Damnation*; it is no wonder that they bear ſuch an Abſolute ſway as to keep up ſtill the ſame continued Averſion to our Religion.

BESIDES this blind Obedience paid to their *Prieſts*, We humbly offer theſe following Reaſons why the *Reformation* hath, in all this time, made no farther Progreſs in this Kingdom.

THE *Firſt* is the *Dependance* which the *Papiſts* have always had upon Foreign Princes. The *Pope*'s Supremacy, and Infallibility being the Principle Points of their Religion, They are apt to imagine that all the States of *Europe*, who are of the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, muſt be in their Intereſt; and therefore that a time may happen when, by Their aſſiſtance, They may root out the *Proteſtants*, and ſhake off their Subjection to the Crown of *Great Britain*: And accordingly they have been all along fed with theſe fond Hopes from the beginning of the *Reformation*; which happening about the time when *England* was in Wars with *Spain*,

they

they were taught by their *Prieſts* to make Religion a Pretence for their *Rebellion*, thereby to engage Foreign Powers to aſſiſt them; and upon their being ſuppreſſed, all thoſe Forfeiting Perſons who fled into Popiſh Countries, meeting with a kind Reception and Promiſes of being reſtored; the Encouragement they received they Communicated to their Friends in *Ireland*. By theſe Artifices the poor People, who are naturally Credulous, are ſtill deluded, and kept in Heart from time to time; inſomuch that they are viſibly exalted with the News of any ill Succeſs of Your MAJESTY's Arms and thoſe of the Confederacy, and ſtrangely dejected with the Account we receive of every Victory. Which ſhews that their Dependance is now chiefly on *France*, for being reſtored to their Eſtates, which they think they forfeit all their Hopes of, if they ſhould turn *Proteſtants*.

ANOTHER Apparent Cauſe is the great Want of a ſufficient Number of *Clergy* in moſt Parts of this Kingdom; the Reaſon of which is, that, upon the *Diſſolution of Abbies* and *Monaſteries*, the Tythes, then Appropriated for their Support, were granted to *Laymen*, either in *Fee-Farms* or *Leaſes*: Many of which *Leaſes* (tho now expired) are continued in the ſame Hands as if they had been *Fee-Farms*. Theſe *Impropriations* being a conſiderable part of the *Tyth* of the whole Kingdom, makes it neceſſary for the Biſhop to Unite ſeveral adjoyning Pariſhes, to make up a ſmall Proviſion for a Miniſter. This, together with there being no *Glebes* in One Pariſh in Ten, and moſt of thoſe but ſmall, and often *in ſcattered Parcels*, together with th eWant of *Churches* and *Manſe-Houſes*, make the *Local Reſidence* of the Clergy in many places Impracticable. Your MAJESTY has been Graciouſly pleaſed already to lay a Foundation for the Buying in of *Impropriations*, by Your Royal Grant of the FIRST FRUITS for that purpoſe.

THERE are other Concurrent Cauſes of keeping up the *Popiſh Intereſt* in this Kingdom; as Firſt, the Unſteadineſs of the Meaſures which have been uſed towards thoſe of that Perſwaſion. Sometimes Methods of great Severity have been try'd, and then again they have been on a ſudden Indulged, and Tolerated, and the Laws made with reſpect to them rarely executed; which makes them, under the greateſt Difficulties ſtill hope for a return of the ſame Connivance and Indulgence.

ANOTHER Cauſe is the great Number of *Popiſh Lawyers*, which increaſes daily, notwithſtanding the late *Act* againſt their Practiſing at the Bar; Inſomuch that the Number of their Students at the *Inns of Court* is greater than ever. Theſe find out Ways of evading all Laws againſt *Popery*, and, together with their *Prieſts*, have been the main Inſtruments of carrying on Deſigns againſt the *Proteſtant* Government.

THE Laws againſt *Foreign Education* not being ſtrictly put in Execution, concurs likewiſe very much to the keeping up the *Popiſh* Religion and Intereſt in this Kingdom; Many Children of the Papiſts, being ſent abroad to be Educated, return Home Seaſon'd with all the Invenom'd Prejudices and Pernicious Doctrines of *Popiſh Seminaries*. To which may be added, that others are Educated at Home under *Popiſh School-Maſters*; who, after all our Induſtry, cannot be ſufficiently diſcovered, and ſuppreſſed.

ANOTHER ground of their Hatred to our Church, and no ſmall Hindrance to their Converſion, and which they themſelves aſſign, and frequently object to us; is, the great Variety of *Schiſmaticks* and *Sectaries* among

among thoſe, that call themſelves Proteſtants; tho' many of them are of their own making. This creates in them an Invincible Prejudice againſt us: Seeing ſo many different Communions, they are apt to conclude us all equally Erroneous, and ſtick to their Imaginary *Infallibility*. This is the great Stumbling Block and Rock of Offence that lies in their way; and upon which ſo many Souls are loſt and ſhipwreck'd by continuing in Idolatry and Superſtition, and a ſtupid Ignorance of all Religion, which may be added to all the other Deplorable Conſequences of their Seperation.

THE ſeveral Particulars Your MAJESTY has been Graciouſly pleas'd to recommend to our moſt ſerious Conſideration, are ſo many Proofs of Your Pious and Wiſe Deſigns, for the Good of this Church and People committed to Your Charge, which fills our Hearts with inexpreſſible Joy and Satisfaction. We pray for Your MAJESTY as Perſons truly ſenſible, that in ſo doing, we are calling for Spiritual and Temporal Bleſſings upon us, and our Poſterity.

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Ja. Cogbill, Regr.

FINIS.

Errat. Page 6. Line 17. *for* to come, *read* to come over.